

The crunch has created a very interesting set of changes. It has meant that where in the past one person was working was enough for the family to stay ahead of the game, today, often it is two people working at more than one job. At least in the case of the people of my State of Michigan the solution, it seems to me, is quite clear. Unless we are going to get to the point where families working two jobs and two breadwinners working two jobs is inadequate to allow working families to keep up, we have to give them some relief. The one way the Federal Government can provide that relief is by reducing the tax burden that these families face.

Mr. President, I do not have the time today nor do I intend today to go into a variety of ways by which we can ease that burden. But I think the kinds of plans that have been put forth by Bob Dole and Jack Kemp, calling for across-the-board tax relief, combining that with a \$500-per-child tax credit is a step in the right direction. I think that is what the families of Michigan, the families of America can benefit from.

I add, Mr. President, in closing, in our State of Michigan we reduced taxes 21 times in the last 5 years. That has produced record levels of employment and it has not caused a budget deficit. We have balanced the budget and created a surplus at the same time. We need to give families that relief. I look forward to working within the Senate to accomplish that. I yield the floor.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ABRAHAM FAMILY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, did I understand the distinguished Senator from Michigan to say that there had been a new birth?

Mr. ABRAHAM. That is correct. I say to the Senator from West Virginia, I am happy to inform you as of 2:25 p.m. yesterday afternoon the third baby in the Abraham family was born. I am proud of our new son named Spencer who has joined us.

Mr. BYRD. This is the third child.

Mr. ABRAHAM. We have twin daughters who are 3 years old, Betsy and Julie, and now they have a little brother.

Mr. BYRD. I congratulate the Senator and the Abraham family.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Thank you very much.

Mr. BYRD. He has thrice tasted the experience of immortality. He is living on a new plateau.

What is the new child's name?

Mr. ABRAHAM. I have to indicate that with a certain amount of pride. It is Spencer. He is named after his father.

Mr. BYRD. Wonderful, wonderful.

May I say to the new child:

Once in thy father's arms, a new born child,
thou didst weep while those around thee smile;
so live that in thy lasting sleep
thou mayst smile while those around thee weep.

ALTERNATIVES TO MIDDLE EAST OIL DEPENDENCE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I strongly support the actions of President Clinton in responding to the latest round of the politics of aggression by the Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein. The response by President Clinton follows in the wise policy footsteps of President Bush by taking strong action, and in acting as a leader of both the West and the Middle East in responding to aggression.

To those who would doubt the necessity of the actions by the President, one should pose the question as to what the consequences would be in the face of American inaction. First, clearly, no other country would take the lead. The signature of the current era is such that response to aggression will not be taken up by other powers in the absence of American leadership, unfortunately. This was the case in the invasion of Kuwait. It was the case in Bosnia when, after several years of Western inaction in the face of ethnic atrocities in Bosnia, only the United States, only the United States, could bring about a credible, effective implementation of peace in that sorry part of Europe. While one should have rightfully expected the European nations to have led that effort, they did not, and would not, in the absence of American leadership. The same is the case today in the Middle East. Our friends and allies in Europe and the Middle East will not act in the absence of American leadership.

It is American leadership which is decisive to the peace in these regions, and I commend President Clinton for his decisive action. It was necessary to weaken the Iraqi leader's ability to intimidate his neighbors, and to make it clear that he will pay a price for his aggression. As President Clinton stated, our action has changed the strategic situation, with Saddam's military capabilities weakened in the south of Iraq. If further actions are necessary to ensure the protection of our pilots in the no-fly zone, then he will continue to have my unstinting support. The President's actions have ensured that the coalition which has acted to restrain and discipline Iraq since the invasion of Kuwait remains viable and intact.

It has been stated on many occasions, during the Gulf war and most recently by Secretary Perry in expressing the vital interests of the United States in the Middle East, that our policy is driven by the energy security interests of the United States. Oil, oil, is the lifeblood of our industrial base, and both Western Europe and the United States, as well as Japan, are far too dependent on the Middle East for supplies. We need to get serious about alternative sources of energy, clean coal technology, other non-petroleum sources, and the overall development of alternative sources of oil.

A very important, world-class, alternative source of oil exists and awaits development in the Caspian Sea area. Following the break-up of the Soviet

Union, large oil resources are now available for commercial development. According to industry sources, some 42 billion barrels of proven oil reserves in this region are available for lifting and transport to the west.

The oil pot of the region is estimated by American industry sources to be comparable to that of the vast Saudi Arabian fields, a potential of some 200 billion barrels of oil, and includes, as well, enormous natural gas reserves. Some 2-4 million barrels of oil per day could be brought out of the Caspian region, across Turkey by pipeline, and to the United States market. These new reserves, in the newly independent states of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, can bring substantial, rapid economic development to those nations, as well as to Turkey, on their western border. The riches of these reserves can bring new stability and stable independence to those new nations. For the West, Caspian Sea oil could help to diversify the world oil suppliers, stimulate price competition, and bring new security to our supplies.

Already, aggressive efforts have been underway by Western oil companies to develop this resource. In Azerbaijan, a \$7.5 billion contract with the Azerbaijan International Operating Company, a consortium of 12 energy companies, including 5 U.S. companies, could produce an estimated three billion barrels of crude oil over the next twenty years. In Kazakhstan, there is a \$20 billion joint venture between an American oil company and the Kazakh government which could yield as much as 9 billion barrels of crude oil over the next 40 years.

Nevertheless, the oil industry cannot by itself accomplish this achievement. The region has been in turmoil as a result of war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, with large disrupting movements of refugees, and there are constant political and other pressures from Russia and the Islamic world bearing on the Caspian region. The resulting instability requires increased involvement and commitment by the United States Government for large scale projects to go forward. The power and the influence of the United States Government are necessary to accomplish the development of an assured supply of petroleum resources to the West. I believe this should be a major priority for the next administration. The stakes, both economic and strategic, are enormous.

Mr. President, Caspian region oil can be transhipped by pipeline across Turkey, avoiding politically fragile routes through the Middle East or through an unpredictable Russia. Turkey is enthusiastic about this prospect and is ready and able to cooperate with America to make the development of this major new alternative oil source available to the United States. We should not forget, as we so often forget, the contribution of Turkey to the Western anti-Saddam alliance. It was Turkey which

shut down the Iraqi pipeline in 1990, at the request of the United Nations, after Saddam invaded Kuwait. Turkey has continued to keep this pipeline shut down, a great economic loss to Turkey and her people. We forget that. Thus, the development of Caspian Sea region oil is an opportunity to repay Turkey and help her stabilize her economy at the same time that America can develop a new and secure supply of this vital resource. Mr. President, I believe the United States must make an aggressive, fresh commitment to securing new oil supplies, a commitment equal to that we have made in responding to military aggression in the Middle East. The two efforts should go hand in hand. They are part of the same geostrategic calculation and interest. We need to move ahead now to reduce our dependency on vulnerable Middle East oil. A major new government-industry partnership to develop the promising Caspian region is long overdue and has the potential of a great energy payoff for the United States of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WHY AFRICA MATTERS

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, I have been speaking a number of times on why Africa matters to the United States. I spoke before the recess on infectious disease and environmental concerns and how what is happening in Africa can affect the rest of the world, and the United States as well.

Today, I would like to address a broader point about environmental issues—what happens to the natural world in Africa holds consequences for Americans. Even as we struggle to find reasonable, responsible solutions to domestic environmental problems, we must remember that our future is closely intertwined with the preservation and sound management of the environment around the world—particularly in Africa.

Today much of Africa today is caught in a cycle of environmental degradation, poverty and humanitarian crises. Battles over scarce resources can lead to political conflict, which in turn results in forced migration, and further environmental destruction. As a result, the international community feels the effects of not only global environmental changes, but also refugee flows, instability, and sagging trade revenues.

Mr. President, the evidence of environmental degradation on the African continent is overwhelming. From deforestation to land degradation, the shrinking diversity of African plant

life to the increasing number of endangered species, the African environment affects the United States.

DEFORESTATION

Let me begin with the most shocking of all the environmental problems sweeping the continent—deforestation. Consider the following:

In 1900, forests accounted for 40 percent of the highlands in the Horn of Africa. By 1990, only 4.4 percent of these forested highlands remained.

In 1961, as much as 60 percent of the west African nation of Sierra Leone was covered by primary rainforest. Today, that figure has dropped to 6 percent.

These are but two examples of what is an all-too-familiar pattern on the continent. And because Africa's population is projected to increase by over 50 percent as early as 2010, the pressures on remaining forest lands are likely to grow as people seek new land to live on, new fields to cultivate, and new sources of firewood for cooking and heating.

The immediate consequences of deforestation are soil erosion and flooding. Combined with other forms of land degradation, these trends lead to food shortages and massive displaced populations. Some experts believe that severe desertification will affect more than 100 million people on the continent by 2010. Already, food shortages threaten 22 million people in sub-Saharan Africa. Trapped in a cycle of poverty and need, these people will continue to destroy their natural environment in a desperate effort to survive.

Unless we recognize the larger environmental factors that create and exacerbate crises, the United States will continue to operate in a reactive mode, addressing tragic and costly emergencies and famines after they occur, and watching potentially strong societies and markets descend into disaster.

The consequences of ignoring environmental issues in Africa extend beyond humanitarian and economic concerns. Africa's forests, like those in South America, act as carbon sinks—absorbing harmful carbon emissions. As global population rates grow, rural-to-urban migration continues, and more and more people drive cars, our capacity to manage air pollution here in the United States and around the world may depend on the survival of these forests.

BIODIVERSITY

Mr. President, in addition to these disturbing trends in land quality, biodiversity depletion in Africa also impacts our future—particularly in the field of medicine. Over and over again, researchers have found highly effective cures in the forests of Africa:

Some may smile at this. But this is scientific research that shows, as a matter of fact, that the rosy periwinkle that grows in Madagascar is highly effective in treating Hodgkin's disease and leukemia.

Bark from the African plum tree has proven successful in treating enlarged

prostate glands. Yet, in the 1980's, environmental mismanagement in west Africa brought the region's plum trees dangerously close to extinction.

We cannot know what other cures may be contained in Africa's rapidly disappearing forest lands—and never will unless more is done to combat the environmental destruction sweeping the continent.

Mr. President, just as environmental degradation puts the future of medical research at risk, we cannot begin to guess at what agricultural breakthroughs may never occur as the diversity of African crops is lost to environmental crises. For example, we have already learned:

Germplasm from African crops may help the rest of the world to adjust to climate changes by breeding drought-resistant varieties of grain.

Researchers at the National Academy of Sciences have identified pearl millet, which grows mainly in west Africa, as a potential jewel for genetic research, due its natural genetic diversity, robust nature, and quick maturation.

The African Continent may be home to other, lesser known agricultural breakthroughs that will contribute to global well-being, provided they do not fall victim to the environmental devastation.

Mr. President, in recent years, the international community and Africans have become increasingly concerned about threats to animal kingdom diversity. Poaching, human encroachment on animals' natural habitats, and ineffective wildlife management continue to endanger several unique species. While African elephants appear to be making a comeback, black rhinos remain in danger, as do cheetahs, mountain gorillas, and other magnificent species of wildlife. A basic respect for life and an appreciation for its diverse forms demands that we recognize and address the problem of endangered species on the African Continent.

Mr. President, all of these trends, as well as the relationship between environmental upheaval and emerging diseases that I discussed earlier, make the case for a thoughtful and engaged foreign policy toward Africa.

Responsible and creative environmental policies in Africa—including land management, agroforestry initiatives, pollution reduction, and biodiversity preservation—serve U.S. national interests. With patience and engagement, we gain new cures for painful diseases and new crops to feed our children into the 21st century. We preserve the magnificent diversity of animal life for our grandchildren. And we help bring stability, development and economic growth to the African Continent.

We can't do this all by ourselves. That would not be successful policy in and of itself. But we should be mindful of the fact that it does influence the United States and other nations and other continents around the world. And that is why we should be concerned.